

THE LACLEDE BLADE

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He Never Lived on a Farm

Although much of the injury due to free trade laws has already been done, so far as the agricultural products of the present season are concerned, import duties should be established as a protection for the American producer in the future. It is not to be expected that establishment of a protective tariff now will entirely undo the mischief that has been done, for the goods already imported are in our markets in full competition with American products. The losses that have been sustained, due in part to the free trade tariff law, will serve to impress upon the minds of agriculturists the extent of their interest in protection. They will not forget, however, that a large part of the loss has been a result of the forced deflation of credit following along process of inflation which increased costs of production. The deflation process became effective after the farmer had increased the cost of producing his crops and before he had opportunity to sell. In view of both the tariff record and the financing record of the Wilson regime; there is ample justification for the assertion that "the Wilson administration during the past year has done more to make rural life unattractive than any other administration ever did"—and yet in his annual message to congress President Wilson had the hardihood to assert that there is need for action "to make rural life more attractive and beautiful."

Running Wild

The national family has been running wild. It has plunged into debt by living far beyond its means. The family can avert insolvency only by cutting down its overhead of expenditures and adopting habits of thrift and economy on the part of its individual members.

Local and federal taxes have been sky-rocketed as a result of war activities.

Nearly every human effort that was formerly met by the individual has been foisted upon the taxpayer.

The federal government must be brought to earth and a couple of billions cut from the budget.

Every state government must retrench. This is easier said than done, when the pressure of officialism is all for expansion. But every western state could pare off a million or two from its fixed charges.

The war is over and every producer and employe cannot be paid on a war time basis of profit.

Taxation has reached the point where it is the greatest hindrance to investment and development of industry.

Next to the duty of the individual man, woman and child to save and accumulate bank accounts, is the duty of lawmakers to stop the ascending scale of public expenditure, curb the demands of self-expanding officialism, and reduce the fixed charges of government which have become exorbitant and industrially paralyzing and prohibitory.

Price of Land Too High

As a result of the phenomenal advance in Iowa land values during the spring and summer of 1919, the United State depart-

ment of agriculture, in cooperation with the Iowa State College of agriculture, made an investigation, which shows that the prices at which farm land was sold in many sections of that state were too high to justify the returns which can be made from it. It was found that the average value of Iowa lands increased \$121 per acre in the five years from 1915 to 1920, and that \$63 of this increase occurred between March, 1919, and March, 1920, the twelfth month including the period of the boom. Over 65 per cent of the buyers and over 56 per cent of the sellers were farmers, while, contrary to general belief perhaps, less than 7 per cent of the buyers and but a little over 11 per cent of the sellers were real estate men. The facts relative to the per cent of return on investment in these lands which were bot out make it clear that they are valued in excess of their earning capacity. The investigators point out that with land paying but 3 per cent on capitalization, and loans running at 6 per cent or more, buying a farm on a large margin of credit is a difficult undertaking for the farmer of average ability as a manager.

Public Health

Many great statesmen have recognized that the safety and prosperity of a country depend largely on the health and strength of its population, declares Dr. M. P. Ravenel of the school of medicine of the university Missouri, president of the American public health association. Lord Beaconsfield said: "The health of the people is the first duty of a statesman." Half-sick people do a half-day's work, at most, and do not do that half well. Efficiency is reduced or destroyed by sickness, production is lessened, and progress is hampered. A healthy body is a willing servant, while a sick body is a tyrant, demanding service and attention to the exclusion of all other duties.

In what way is the public or the state concerned with sickness of the individual? Most people do not realize clearly enough that the foundation of the community is the individual, and that whatever affects the individual adversely must also injure the community as a whole, with every member of that community.

The war did much to demonstrate and bring home these facts to us. For the first time in our history we had the opportunity to test a large number of our young men physically, at a time of life when they should have been at the peak of health and vigor. Nearly one-third were found physically unfit for full military duty. Many of those rejected were victims of injuries or lack of care during infancy and childhood, and would have grown up physically fit if proper treatment have been given in early life.

We hope that we shall never have another war, but we must be prepared, and good health is needed for peace as well as for war.

The state of Missouri has never provided money enough to establish a Child Welfare Division in its State Board of Health. Such a division has been formed during the last two years by the aid of the United States public health service. This aid will soon be withdrawn, however, and unless the legislature appropriates funds for its continuance, this most important

work of the board will come to an end.

It is the duty of the public to see to it that our children are cared for, as they are the future citizens on whose shoulders the responsibility of carrying this great state forward will rest within a few years. Each individual citizen shares the responsibility.

Do not try to shrink it nor to pass it on to someone else, urges Doctor Ravenel. When Cain killed Able, he tried to shirk responsibility by the question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Even then the blood of his brother was crying out against him. We are all our brother's keepers. Just as surely as we shirk our duty to the little ones of our state, just so surely will the blood of these innocents cry out against us.

Let us get behind the State Board of Health in its efforts to protect our children.

Reduced Railroad Rates

All railroads have agreed to make a 1 1/2 rate on round-trip tickets for farmer's week at the college of agriculture in Columbia, January 17-21.

This is a concession on the part of the railroads which has not been enjoyed for some time. It is therefore fully assured that the attendance at this Farmers' Week will exceed by far the number attending at any previous year. Farmers' Week audiences have been very large for many years, but the college of agriculture will also be able to accommodate the added numbers who come with their problems for better farming.

What was formerly known as 39th street in Chicago, the new road extending from Lake Michigan to the west side boulevard, six miles, has been named Pershing Road, in honor of General John J. Pershing. Many government warehouses are located on Pershing Road and the army trucks which use it for a highway lend significance to the new name.

A sensible woman knows that the occasional grouch who is a good provider is rather to be chosen than the tabby cat who makes her do the providing.

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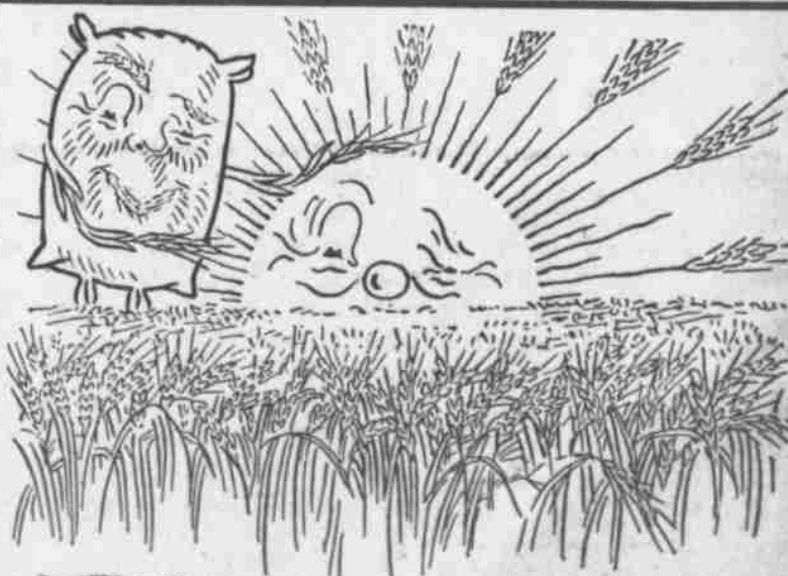
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